

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 01944 132012Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 H-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
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R 131756Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6630
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 1944

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, UY
SUBJECT: CENTRAL OFFICE FOR INFORMATION ON PERSONS (OCIP)

REF: (A) STATE 137071 (NOTAL) (B) CHEEK MEMCON APRIL 7 (NOTAL)

BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

1. ALTHOUGH HUMAN RIGHTS INQUIRIES CAN BE SENT TO THE
"OFICINA CENTRAL DE PERSONAS" THROUGH THE URUGUAYAN
EMBASSY, THE OCIP PREFERS THAT QUERIES FROM OUTSIDE
URUGUAY BE SENT DIRECTLY TO THE FOLLOWING:

CNEL. CARLOS A. MAYNARD, DIRECTOR
OFICINA CENTRAL DE INFORMACION DE PERSONAS
CALLE URUGUAY 972
MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

2. AS NOTED IN REF A, EMBASSY'S OFFICIAL-INFORMAL CHANNEL
INQUIRIES WERE TRANSFERRED TO OCIP, WHICH ASSUMED THE ROLE
OF THE OLD CAMPS CHANNEL AS OUR PRIMARY SOURCE OF OFFICIAL
INFORMATION ON DETAINEES. EMBASSY RECENTLY RECEIVED FROM
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OCIP THRITY REPLIES TO OUTSTANDING HUMAN RIGHTS INQUIRIES
REDUCING BY TWO-THIRDS THE BACKLOG OF UNANSWERED INQUIRIES.
(DATA ON INDIVIDUAL CASES OF INTEREST TO THE DEPARTMENT WILL
BE SENT BY SEPTTEL). THIS WAS OCIP'S FIRST RESPONSE TO THE
EMBASSY SINCE IT OPENED IN APRIL. THE DELAY WAS CAUSED BY
OCIP'S START-UP PROBLEMS, UNDERSTAFFING AND THE ACCUMULATION OF
SEVERAL THOUSAND OLD INQUIRIES WHICH IT INHERITED FROM

VARIOUS SOURCES. COL. MAYNARD HAS STATED THAT REPLIES TO INQUIRIES ON NAMES PREVIOUSLY RESEARCHED WILL BE HANDLED EXPEDITIOUSLY (IN TWO TO THREE WEEKS), BUT THAT THERE MAY BE A DELAY OF TWO TO FOUR MONTHS ON NEW NAMES. THUS, A WIDE VARIANCE IN RESPONSE TIME MUST BE EXPECTED. INQUIRERS SHOULD BE ADVISED OF THIS POSSIBILITY.
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COMMENT: RECENT FOLLOW-UP CALLS ON COL. MAYNARD REVEAL CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE PHYSICAL SITUATION OF THE OFFICE SINCE EARLY APRIL (REF B). HOWEVER COL. MAYNARD LACKS SUFFICIENT STAFF PERSONNEL TO ASSIST HIM IN OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND IN DRAFTING REPLIES, DESPITE HIS REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT. THE EMBASSY HAS RAISED MAYNARD'S PLIGHT WITH APPROPRIATE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OFFICIALS, STRESSING TO THEM THE IMPORTANCE OF A SMOOTHLY AND EFFICIENTLY RUNNING OCIP.

4. OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH MAYNARD REVEAL THAT, IN ADDITION TO ANSWERING OUTSIDE INQUIRIES, HE ALSO HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS, E.G., RESEARCHING THE ALLEGATIONS OF DISAPPEARANCES AND DEATHS UNDER TORTURE IN A RECENT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PAMPHLET. COL. MAYNARD ADMITS TO ENCOUNTERING RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF GOU SECURITY FORCES TO RELEASE INFORMATION TO HIM, BUT STATES THAT HE IS RE-CONFIDENTIAL

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CEIVING ADEQUATE SUPPORT FROM THE JOINT STAFF (ESMACO) AND HE BELIEVES THAT, AS HIS OFFICE BECOMES BETTER KNOWN, THESE PROBLEMS WILL DECREASE.

5. DESPITE ITS INITIAL PROBLEMS AND DELAYS, WE ANTICIPATE THAT OCIP WILL BE ABLE SUBSTANTIALLY TO FULFILL ITS FUNCTION AS AN OFFICIAL, INSTITUTIONALIZED SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS CASES. AS SUCH, IT REPRESENTS A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF PRESIDENT MENDEZ' COMMITMENT TO PRESIDENT CARTER LAST SEPTEMBER AND A MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENT IN THE GOU POSTURE ON HUMAN RIGHTS INQUIRIES.
CHEEK

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